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TRAINING IN UNIVERSITIES FOR CONSULAR AND DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

The subject of training for public service in the foreign field has recently been attracting renewed interest. Committees of the American Political Science Association and the American Economic Association have been collecting information and recommending measures in the whole field of training for public service, including the diplomatic and consular service. A comprehensive report upon the teaching of international law in American universities has been published by the Division of International Law of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. During the eighth annual meeting of the American Society of International Law a conference of teachers of international law was held, leading to the adoption of a series of sixteen resolutions on various phases of this important matter. A review of prevailing conditions and a statement of present tendencies, in view of these developments, is the purpose of this article.

Successive administrations under the party system in the United States have almost uniformly used places in the diplomatic and consular services as rewards for more or less valuable contributions to party triumphs. The foreign service has been the last branch of the national government to share even a partial application of the principle that appointment to and continuance in public administrative offices should be based primarily upon training and proven fitness. Civil service rules had been extended to cover other offices by tens of thousands before cautious steps were taken to bring diplomatic and consular positions under similar regulations. Less than ten years ago, on November 10, 1905, President Roosevelt issued an executive order providing for the appointment of secretaries of embassies and legations either after examinations testing the qualifications of applicants or by transfer or promotion from some branch of the foreign service—a policy continued by President Taft under an executive order issued on November 26, 1909. Qualifying examinations for certain grades of the consular service and

for the student interpreter corps were inaugurated under President Roosevelt's executive order of June 27, 1906. Congress has not enacted laws for merit systems of examination, appointment and promotion in any branch of the foreign service. Proposals for such laws have always failed of adoption, despite earnest advocacy by individual statesmen and by organizations such as the National Business League of America.¹

Regulations of the Department of State in fulfillment of executive orders require candidates for the offices of secretary of embassy or legation to pass written examinations upon the following subjects:

- (1) International law.
- (2) Diplomatic usage.
- (3) Modern language (French, German or Spanish).
- (4) Natural, industrial, and commercial resources and commerce of the United States.
- (5) American history, government, and institutions.
- (6) Modern history (since 1850) of Europe, South America, and the Far East.
- (7) Composition, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and writing, as shown in the above papers.

Oral examinations also are given to test "the candidate's business ability, alertness, general contemporary information, and natural fitness for the service, including moral, mental, and physical qualifications, character, address, and general education and good command of English."

Candidates for appointments as student interpreters, consular assistants, and consuls (of the eighth or ninth classes), are required to pass the above oral examinations, but omit written examinations upon diplomatic usage while adding maritime and commercial law, political and commercial geography, arithmetic, and political economy.

During the four years prior to November, 1913, some seventy-five men, about half of whom passed, took examinations for admission to the student interpreter corps or to the designated lower grades of the consular

¹ An order of September 20, 1895, issued by President Cleveland, had provided that lesser positions in consulates or commercial agencies should be filled either by promotion within the service or after qualifying examinations. The order was little regarded in practice.

service. When the first examinations since the change in the partisan control of the national administration were held, in January, 1914, for consuls, consular assistants, and student interpreters, one hundred and forty-four men were examined, and of these fifty-six were reported as having passed. Similar examinations for secretaries in the diplomatic service had been taken in November, 1913, by thirty-seven men, ten of whom passed.

One of the earlier unsuccessful candidates, a young man characterized by a professor in a New England university as "one of the best students I ever had in the advanced course in diplomatic history," gives in a letter the following interesting account of his unsatisfactory personal experiences:

The schedule of the examinations, which of course may be changed at any time, was written on the first two days and the oral on the third day. Each candidate is given a number at the start and is known by that number for the rest of the exams. In the written exams, time is a great drawback. Enough time is given for the law, four hours being allowed for it, but on all other exams. there is not enough time allowed.

I had flattered myself that I knew something about international law until I took the exam. * * * Three-fourths of the questions are cases to be decided.

On the histories and on diplomacy I feel sure I did well and they were not difficult after the books I had been through with you.

The "language" is almost impossible. The time allowed is only one hour and a half and even the best of our bunch failed to complete it. The letter to translate was not very difficult but the English letter to put back into the language you offer is next to impossible. * * * I'll wager a teacher of the language couldn't complete the exam. in the time allotted.

The paper on commercial, industrial, and natural resources of the U. S. was also impossible and it is mostly luck as they can ask most anything they choose. * * *

The oral exam. is not so hard as everyone imagines. We were examined in groups of six by _____ and a board of four other men. They have an interpreter who converses with you in the language you offer, but it only lasts about two minutes for each person. He asked each of our six to describe the city of Washington. The rest of the exam. is in English and they ask you anything under the sun, law, current events, etc. If a man keeps his nerve the ordeal is not as bad as one thinks and I enjoyed it more than any other part of the exams.

Regarding all of these examinations, it must be remembered that they are simply qualifying tests for men who have succeeded, through cus-

tomary methods of political influence and recommendation, in being designated by the President for possible appointments. Such examinations are not open to all applicants. They are not competitive or determinative. As ex-Secretary of State John W. Foster remarks in his book, *Practice of Diplomacy*, they do "not remove admission into the service from the baneful influence of political favoritism, and hence offer the young men of the country little encouragement to prepare themselves for the diplomatic career." The same point is thus stated by a professor in a Mississippi Valley university where training courses for foreign service are offered:

We have not felt warranted in urging students to take these courses with a view to entering governmental service because it is impossible to assure any one of a position afterwards. The support and approval of the Senators is still necessary to secure appointments, even when the examinations are passed. * * * The number of students who have attempted to follow out our program of studies in preparation for the Consular and Diplomatic Service has been quite small. If my memory is correct, there have been only two students who completed all the work and qualified for the government examinations. One took the tests and entered the diplomatic service. The other, Mr. _____, finding that the number of men allotted to _____ was full at the time he was ready and that there was little hope of his getting an appointment in the Consular service for three or four years, even if he passed the examinations, did not take the tests, but entered business instead.

An effort to learn particulars about the training of candidates who have taken qualifying examinations has met with unsatisfactory results. "It is not possible to give you information regarding the training of all the candidates without considerable research," writes Mr. Miles M. Shand, Chief of the Bureau of Appointments. "I will say to you, however, that all the diplomatic service candidates [ten out of thirty-seven] who were successful in the examinations had college training. Forty of the successful candidates [fifty-six out of one hundred and forty-four] in the consular service examination had college training. All of these men, however, were not graduates of colleges and universities, and I may say that many of the unsuccessful candidates also had college training." Out of sixteen well known colleges and universities which have been announcing courses training men for diplomatic and consular services, all but one or two report extremely small numbers of students

pursuing these courses. Almost no students carry through such courses to obtain degrees, diplomas, or certificates. For example, a dean in a certain large State university writes that for some six years his institution "has carried the announcement of the course mentioned, but in that time only a half-dozen men have taken it, and not one of them has taken any government examinations, nor has one of them gone into the consular service." Most candidates who have had sufficient influence to be "specially designated by the President for appointment * * * subject to examination, and subject to the occurrence of an appropriate vacancy," naturally resort to tutors or to "cramming" schools where instructors make a special study of the trend of the government's examinations in order to coach students with immediate reference to expected tests.

The scope of college and university courses to give training for foreign service must necessarily include at least the minimum set forth in the regulations of the Department of State for its qualifying examinations. Good command of written and spoken English is made fundamental, not merely technical correctness in composition and speech, but also facility in expression, are expected. One foreign language, French, German, or Spanish must be readily used, orally and in writing. Computations in arithmetic, especially as applied to commercial life, must be mastered. The political and commercial geography of the world are to be understood, together with wide and accurate knowledge of the resources and commerce of the United States. The facts of American history, the structure and principles of our government, the institutional organizations and processes of our own country, are to be clearly apprehended. The broad field of political economy must be covered. The history of Europe, South America and the Far East since 1850 is another inclusive field. Then international law, with diplomatic usage, and maritime and commercial law, close the list of subjects. Finally the candidates must give evidence of general fitness in his personal qualities and attainments.

Training for "public service" approximating these formal requirements has been announced by Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Pennsylvania, George Washington, Northwestern, California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Miami, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Missouri Universities, and by Dartmouth and Pennsylvania State Colleges. Except for the lack of historical

courses on South America and the Far East, it would be found that fully as many more of the universities are actually giving sufficient courses in their several departments of English, modern languages, history, economics, commerce, political science (including international law and diplomacy), to provide useful training for foreign service. However, the want of systematic purpose in these opportunities led the recent Conference of Teachers of International Law and Related Subjects to adopt the following as resolution number fourteen:

Resolved, That the Conference recommends the establishment and encouragement in collegiate institutions of specialized courses in preparation for the diplomatic and consular service.

It is then pertinent to inquire why so little direct effort has been made to equip young men for life careers in the diplomatic and consular services. Causes are various and are cumulative in their effect. It has already been shown that the present limited use of qualifying examinations rests solely upon executive orders and not upon statutory enactment. Such executive orders give no sufficient guarantee that a policy of appointment and promotion upon examination and merit, apart from partisan influence, will be followed in good faith. Many public men, and organizations such as the National Business League of America, have pointed out that until Congress enacts adequate laws for a merit system of examination, appointment and promotion in the foreign service, there will be little inducement for young men to seek special training for life careers in this field. Recent advices from men of broad experience in the diplomatic service, as well as from university professors in charge of courses which would give preparation for such service, show that young men are being actually deterred by this cause from training for this career. "Another deterrent to attendance on such a course," writes an experienced diplomat, "is that the student who stands highest or passes the State Department examination is not sure of an appointment to the service. Political or personal influence too often controls the selection by the President and Secretary of State." Other men of high standing in our diplomatic service of whom inquiry has been made likewise express regret that uncertainties of appointment and tenure of office discourage able and ambitious young men from training for this service. One pointedly adds: "The sweeping changes

made by the present administration in diplomatic appointments have been a severe blow to university work along these lines."

A professor in a large institution gives his opinion that "as long as the diplomatic service is regarded as fair game for the politicians and our consular service is not put on a definite basis by Congress but depends on the personal opinion of the President, there will never be more than a small handful of students who care to avail themselves of such a course as we now offer." Another professor believes "that the present attitude of the Democratic administration towards the posts in the diplomatic service has tended to discourage a number of the men * * * interest has been smothered by the actual conditions of the service." In short, there is clear need for a wisely framed system under an act of Congress providing, first, that men who are deficient in training and personal qualifications shall be ineligible for appointment in the foreign service, and second, that retention and promotion shall depend only upon considerations of efficiency and not upon partisan influence.

While the maintenance of "a fair field and no favors" may seem to require the continuance of some form of public examinations, why may there not be direct recognition of certificates for high attainments in university training courses for public service? A plan of this kind was embodied in a bill introduced in the recent session of Congress. The proposition implies a simple extension of the principle often followed when graduates of reputable law schools are admitted to the bar without the usual examinations, or when the diplomas of standard medical schools are made a legal basis for granting licenses to physicians and surgeons. A precedent also was recently established by the West Point authorities when they provided that candidates having proper credentials from standard institutions may be exempted from the usual mental examinations for entrance as cadets. Probably a score of the State universities, and about half as many privately endowed institutions, are now equipped to give adequate instruction in subjects required for training for the foreign service. The acceptance of their certificates under reasonable regulations would give a great stimulus to ambitious young men to take real training for diplomatic and consular careers. There would then be no need to choose between the acceptance of men of little or no training and the creation of a new government school of

diplomacy—the latter suggested by the analogy of our military and naval academies.

The small number of positions and the low salaries of the places which young men may hope to obtain through training for foreign service would, even under favorable circumstances, constitute causes for their further discouragement. Entrance to positions as consular assistants and to the two lowest consular ranks (the eighth and ninth) may be had, under terms of executive orders, by those who, having been designated for possible appointments, successfully pass the stated examinations. But there are only thirty consular assistants, who begin on salaries of \$1,000 and may rise to a maximum of \$1,800 after four years. Then there are only forty-five consuls of the ninth class, in which the salary is \$2,000, and sixty consuls of the eighth class with salaries of \$2,500. Appointments as vice consuls, deputy consuls, consular agents, and clerks, are made without the requirement of examinations. Nevertheless, if promotions to higher consular positions were made only as rewards for the most efficient work in the lower ranks, capable and ambitious young men would find the service attractive.

In the diplomatic field our national administrations have almost uniformly appointed ministers and ambassadors for party reasons, with scant regard for special training or fitness for diplomacy. President Taft, himself a Republican, following a series of Republican predecessors, made an unusual number of promotions from subordinate to the highest diplomatic positions, appointing fifteen out of the nineteen heads of legations in Latin America on the basis of meritorious service—an example not likely to be followed by changing administrations in different circumstances. Under favorable construction of executive orders some sixty positions as secretary of embassy or secretary of legation, with salaries ranging from \$1,200 to \$3,000, are open upon examination or after meritorious service. Clerks are appointed without examinations, but twenty-six student interpreters in Turkey, China, and Japan, may be thus selected, and receive salaries starting at \$1,000 and possibly reaching \$1,800. Here also in the diplomatic field an effective tradition translated into a practice of filling the higher positions by promotion from lower ranks would encourage recruits, despite limits upon the number of possible appointments.

Thus far this article has discussed the equipment of a professionally trained class of public officials for foreign service. But under the political conditions of our democracy there are special reasons for making ample provision for training in this field. Senator Elihu Root has more than once stated the issue with cogency, showing that the public opinion which so profoundly affects our international relations should be based upon an intelligent understanding of international rights and duties. In a similar spirit the resolutions of the Conference of Teachers of International Law and Related Subjects included these significant clauses:

Resolved, That, as the idea of direct government by the people grows, it becomes increasingly essential to the well-being of the world that the leaders of opinion in each community be familiar with the rights and obligations of states, with respect to one another, as recognized in international law. Hence, it has become a patriotic duty, resting upon our educational institutions, to give as thorough and as extensive courses as possible in this subject.

Resolved, That it is the conviction of this Conference that the present development of higher education in the United States and the place which the United States has now assumed in the affairs of the Society of Nations justify and demand that the study of the science and historic applications of international law take its place on a plane of equality with other subjects in the curriculum of colleges and universities and that professorships or departments devoted to its study should be established in every institution of higher learning.

Resolved, That this Conference directs that a letter be sent to teachers of political science, law, history, political economy and sociology throughout the country calling attention to and emphasizing the essential and fundamental importance of a knowledge of international law on the part of students in those branches, which letter shall state the opinion of this Conference that every college of liberal arts, every graduate school and every law school, should have or make provision for courses in international law and urge that all graduate students working in the above mentioned fields be advised to include this subject in their courses of study.

Resolved, That, in recognition of the growing importance of a knowledge of international law to all persons who plan to devote themselves to the administration of justice, and who, through their professional occupation, may contribute largely to the formation of public opinion and who often will be vested with the highest offices in the State and nation, this Conference earnestly requests all law schools which now offer no instruction in international law to add to their curriculum a thorough course on that subject.

The welfare of the United States as one of the family of nations requires attention to effective training for the diplomatic and consular services. Not alone those who consciously plan to seek careers as consuls and diplomatists, but all who may be called in any degree to responsible leadership of our democracy will need to include some such training in their equipment. The more thorough it may be made, the more widely it may be diffused, the better for the peace and progress of the world.

C. A. DUNIWAY.

APPENDIX

The following selections of extracts from a few letters addressed to the author of the above paper will be found to contain interesting reflections and suggestions from the several writers.

FROM JUSTICE WILLIAM R. DAY

I am in sympathy with the suggestion that a course in our State universities with a view to preparing for the consular and diplomatic service would be of great service. While the consular service is not as yet under strict civil service rules, an executive order which is enforced in the State Department requires a thorough examination for admission to office and promotion is now generally made from those who have shown aptitude in the work. This is as it should be, and the progress in this direction is not likely to be disturbed by any return to the old plan of making consular appointments solely upon the basis of political activity.

Despite the wrong method of selection, the American consular representatives have usually been efficient, showing the adaptability of the Americans to new situations and conditions. Under the present plan the service is greatly improved, and, I think, young men may well regard the consular office as opening a career likely to be permanent where efficiency is shown.

I think the course of special preparation in the State universities should at least include the requirements of the State Department, doubtless familiar to you, as to the qualifications of all applicants for admission to the service. Of course, there is no reason why the State universities should not go beyond these requirements, but so much, at any rate, they might teach to the great advantage of those seeking to enter the foreign service.

FROM HON. JOHN W. FOSTER

In the consideration of the establishment of a course of study in the university curriculum, the question arises whether the limited number

of persons who can enter the service will justify the expense and labor of its establishment and of the smaller number of students likely to take such a course. At present the only places open to competitive examination are the secretaries of embassies and legations and the consuls general and consuls, with a few student interpreters. The posts of ambassadors and ministers are now and are likely to be for years to come, filled by selection from public life, although we may hope that our Presidents may see the wisdom of making promotions of secretaries of legation to ministers, as has already been done in some instances. If you will examine the list of secretaries, consuls general, and consuls you will find the number is small.

Another deterrent to attendance on such a course is that the student who stands highest or passes the State Department examination is not sure of an appointment to the service. Political or personal influence too often controls the selection by the President and Secretary of State. But there has been some improvement in this respect, and it is hoped that public sentiment will control in a greater degree in the future.

Such a course as you are considering might be useful in other respects than in fitting young men for a State Department examination. In my intercourse with my countrymen I have been surprised at the ignorance among intelligent persons respecting the functions and usefulness of the diplomatic and consular services, and the relations and difference between the two. The course suggested would furnish our young people with a better knowledge of these matters, even though they do not contemplate entering the service.

FROM HON. WALTER H. PAGE

I think that one good school with a course looking towards service in our consular and diplomatic work might be useful in the United States, but the service is not large enough, I fear, to warrant the establishment of many such courses; for the number of vacancies in the service in any one year is not large.

Nor am I thoroughly convinced that any elaborate special courses would be justified even in one school, further than I should say a two years' post-graduate course in such subjects as international law and usage, and for the consular service in economic geography, in the shipping laws and courses of trade. Some knowledge of these subjects would be a great help, of course, in encouraging candidates to pass the examinations of the government and they would be better equipped then for such work.

I should say that the best preparation for the service would be a good college course in economics and in as many modern languages as possible and then such a special course as I have just indicated, but when you consider the practicability of establishing a number of such schools you are met at the beginning with the small number of men who could obtain positions.

FROM SENATOR ELIHU ROOT

The number of persons employed in the diplomatic and consular service of the United States is so small that it would hardly be justifiable to propose to educate young men exclusively for that service as one is educated for law or medicine or engineering. A separate course, however, which contains the elements of the knowledge and training necessary to be a diplomat or a consul would give a young man a chance for appointment to the service and would be of very great value to him even if he were not appointed. It would be useful in the many branches of business and in the professions which in the United States are coming more and more into contact with foreign affairs, and it would be useful to every one who is fitted by his natural abilities to be a leader of opinion as a citizen regarding the political duties of citizens in their dealing with the subjects to which the diplomatic and consular service relates. The direction which such a course should take can, I think, be best ascertained from the rules and the examination papers which have been prescribed for appointment as consul or diplomatic secretary. The scope and character of these examinations have been carefully worked out and determined by very competent men familiar with the business that diplomats and consuls have to do, and I know of no better way to determine what such a course as you have in mind should be than by making the examination papers the basis upon which to proceed. I think the establishment of such courses in our State universities would be of very great value upon grounds of general public policy, because, however few of the students in them may receive appointment to office, they will serve as an introduction to a knowledge of foreign affairs which is very much needed on the part of our educated and thoughtful people. One very serious difficulty in the international relations of the present day arises from the fact that while modern democracies are taking into their own hands more and more directly the powers of government, and more and more directly control the conduct of government in foreign affairs, a sense of responsibility in foreign affairs has not kept pace with the exercise of power. The voters who exercise the power to determine upon peace or war, upon limitation or freedom of intercourse, upon friendly or unfriendly conduct, thereby assume the responsibility of keeping the peace of the world, of maintaining friendly relations, of seeing to it that their country does justice, and of promoting the universal good understanding which is necessary to the general progress of civilization. Our voters and public men generally do not realize that responsibility. They do not regulate their own conduct by a feeling of responsibility. They do not strive to ascertain and form an intelligent judgment upon what may be the consequence of their action and words. All over the world we can see foreign offices trying to keep the peace, to reach good understanding with other countries, and to be fair toward other countries, and at the same time popular outcry trying to break the peace, to promote misunderstanding, and to insist upon injustice.

It is of great importance that the people of ruling democracies shall realize the responsibilities of their power. As a means towards that end I think such courses as you have in mind would be of very great value.

FROM EX-PRESIDENT WILLIAM H. TAFT

I have no doubt that courses could be framed which would be useful for those who are preparing for the consular and diplomatic service, and that it would be a good thing to have such courses in a State university. The tenure of office, however, in the diplomatic career is so uncertain that I doubt if any university except one near the seat of government at Washington, would be justified in spending much time or money in furnishing such a course.

FROM HON. ANDREW D. WHITE

As to your question, the number of persons appointed to the diplomatic service is, of course, not very large. The number appointed to the consular service is, naturally, larger and has a tendency to increase.

As to the first named, the preparation that is given in some foreign countries, especially in France at the *École Libre des Sciences Politiques*, is very full,—much more so than anything which any of our universities dreams of giving. E. g., this French institution has special courses in the preparation of diplomatic documents, and also of *précis*, or analyses of State papers, the draughting of notes, treaties, and the like. All, I think, that our universities can do at present to prepare men for the diplomatic service would be to give them thorough studies in modern history and in modern languages, especially French, which is the most practical and really the most important, since it “goes” everywhere,—and in the elements of general law, American law and international law. I lay great stress on a certain amount of legal study of the sort usual in our law colleges,—in the preparation of young men for entering the legal profession, and then upon general international law. * * * Of course, the more additional study candidates for entrance into the diplomatic profession can give to literature and general history, the better.

If anything were added to your general courses in law, literature and the like, taken by candidates, I should say that a course of lectures on the *history of treaties*, with some exercises in drawing diplomatic papers, might be useful.

I greatly prize a good course of lectures on international law, for ALL students who have any taste for law, sociology and the like, and there should be a course of lectures on the *development of the history of international law*, * * *

Candidates for the consular service ought to know something, and the more, the better, of ordinary business matters and of the commerce of our country, and this could be given them by means of courses of lectures with supplementary text books. As to their knowledge of inter-

national law, they ought to have very much the same knowledge as that required for the diplomatic service. There is a *Manual* for the use of our consuls, issued by our State Department, which, I think, will give you the best guidance regarding this branch of the service.

I attach great importance, both in the preparation for the diplomatic and for the consular service, to a knowledge of the principles of general, or, as John N. Pomeroy calls it, of "municipal law," and, indeed, if I were in control of the State Department, I should give preference to candidates, who, in addition to the general preparation above named, had had one or two years of actual practice in a law office.